



Armed Conflict

31

MAY

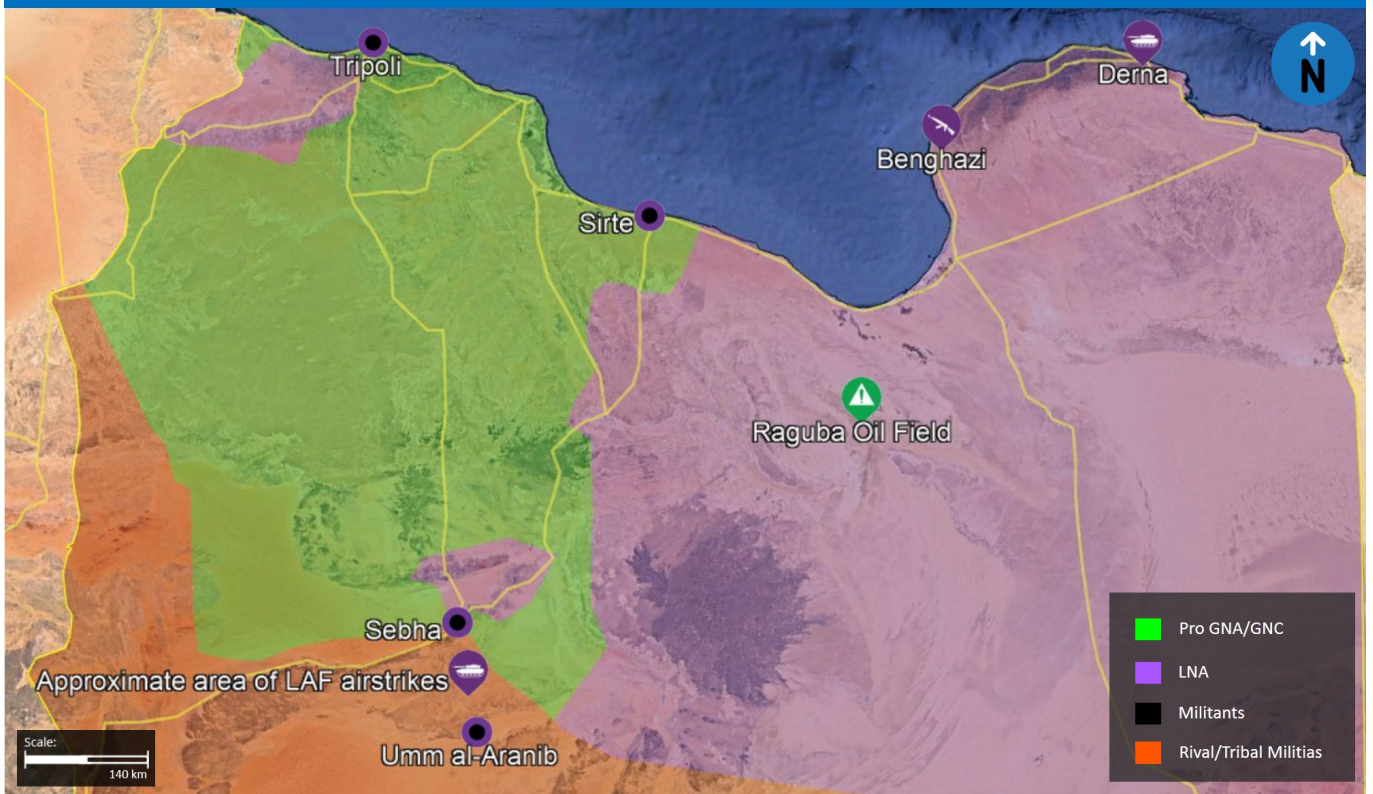
14:54 UTC

Libya SITUATION UPDATE: LNA captures Fattaih area, located southeast of Derna, from DPF militants on May 28

Executive Summary

- The May 24 vehicle-borne IED (VBIED) attack in Benghazi was likely conducted by the Islamic State (IS). The attack is indicative of the militant group's efforts to intensify its activity in Libya at a time when the LNA remains preoccupied in hostilities in Derna. Thus, further such attacks will occur over the coming days and weeks.
- The Libyan National Army's (LNA) seizure of Fattaih from the Derna Protection Force (DPF) is highly notable, given the area's strategic significance for both sides. Over the coming days, the LNA will likely increase pressure on the DPF in areas located west and southwest of the city in an effort to completely gain control over the entire mountain terrain surrounding the city of Derna.
- The May 29 Libyan Air Force (LAF) airstrikes against Chadian militia groups near Sebha are notable as similar airstrikes have been relatively less common over the recent weeks. Given the LAF's commitment to the March 15 "no-fly" zone over southern Libya's airspace, further similar airstrikes against foreign militia groups in the south will occur over the coming weeks.
- Overall, the LNA will further intensify its artillery shelling and airstrikes against DPF positions over the coming days in order to eventually launch a ground offensive into the city of Derna. However, the LNA and LAF's preoccupation in Derna will likely allow groups such as IS and armed militias to increase their activity in other parts of the country in the near term.

Focal Points in Libya



Please be advised

Across the country, the following incidents have been reported:

Benghazi

Date	District/City	Brief Description
May 24	Downtown Benghazi	At least seven killed, 22 wounded in vehicle-borne IED (VBIED) attack in downtown Benghazi's Gamal Adbel Nasser Street following Taraweeh prayers during the night hours of May 24.

Derna

Map #	Date	District/City	Brief Description
1	May 23	Fattaih	Derna Protection Force (DPF) reports clashes with Libyan National Army (LNA) soldiers in Fattaih. Three LNA soldiers killed and wounded.
	May 23	Fattaih	DPF reports killing and wounding of several LNA soldiers in two landmine explosions.
2, 3	May 23	Cemetery, school; Fattaih	LNA claims to control a cemetery and a school.
4	May 23	Tamasakat	LNA claims to have repelled an attack by DPF in Tamasakat.
	May 24	Unspecified locale, southeast of Derna	LNA reportedly attempted to advance towards Derna through the southeastern axis, amidst clashes with the DPF, which included airstrikes conducted by the Libyan Air Force (LAF). An unspecified number of LNA soldiers were reportedly killed and injured in DPF-perpetrated IED attacks meant to stall the LNA's progress.
	May 25	Fattaih	LAF conducts airstrikes

			against DPF positions in Fattaih.
	May 25	Derna	Four DPF militants surrender to LNA forces.
	May 25	Fattaih	DPF reports airstrikes by UAE unmanned aerial vehicles (UAV) against its positions in Fattaih.
5	May 26	Ain Bint; Fattaih	LNA advances against DPF positions in Fattaih, east of Derna, amidst LAF airstrikes. According to reports, the LNA took full control of the Ain Bint area of Fattaih.
6, 7, 8	May 28	Wadi al-Naqqa, western entrance to Derna, Nusseibeh bint Ka'ab Mosque; west of Derna	LNA reportedly captures Wadi al-Naqqa, the western entrance to Derna, and Nusseibeh bint Ka'ab Mosque amidst two failed VBIED attacks by DPF militants.
	May 28	Fattaih	LNA captures Fattaih area from DPF militants amid LAF airstrikes.
	May 29	Unspecified locales, east of Derna	LNA continues to advance in areas located east of Derna amid LAF strikes in Derna.
9, 10, 11	May 29	Derna Sports City, a steam power station, and the Khadija neighborhood; west of Derna	LNA reportedly takes control of the Derna Sports City, Municipal stadium, and the Khadija neighborhood.

Fezzan Region

Date	District/City	Brief Description
May 29	Unspecified locale between Sebha and Umm al-Aranib	LAF reportedly launched airstrikes targeting four positions of Chadian militias.

General Developments

Date	District/City	Brief Description
May 23	Raguba Oil Field	According to the Ministry of Oil and Gas, protesters from the town of Maradah shut down the Raguba Oil Field to demand better living and work conditions.

May 29

Paris

According to further reports, minor distribution delays have been witnessed between the oil field and the Port of Brega due to the shutdown. At the time of writing, it remains unknown as to when the oil field will reopen. House of Representatives (HoR), UN-backed Government of National Accord (GNA) agree upon a declaration “that would create a political framework to pave the way for U.N.-backed elections in December to end the country’s seven-year-old conflict”.

Assessments & Forecast

- The May 24 attack in Benghazi was likely conducted by the Islamic State (IS), as it took place following Taraweeh prayers during the holy month of Ramadan, which in the past, has witnessed an uptick in militant activity across Libya and the Middle East and North Africa region. The attack is likely aimed at presenting Benghazi as unsecure, despite the LNA’s concerted efforts to clear it of jihadist elements. However, IS likely maintains sleeper cells dispersed throughout the city, which may have facilitated this attack. Moreover, recent weeks have witnessed an uptick in IS activity in Libya in general. For instance, on [May 22](#), IS claimed a dual attack that targeted two LNA checkpoints at Gate 60/al-Qunan and in Awjila. This trend is indicative of the militant group’s efforts to intensify its activity in Libya, particularly at a time when the LNA remains preoccupied in hostilities in Derna. Thus, further such attacks will occur over the coming days and weeks.
- The LNA’s seizure of Fattaih from the DPF is highly notable, given the area’s strategic significance for both sides. By taking control of the hills of Fattaih, the LNA forces have essentially taken control over all vantage points overlooking Derna city from the southeast. This also provides the LNA control over the southeastern entrance to the city, which may allow LNA forces to possibly evacuate civilians from the city once the hostilities advance into the urban terrain. Over the coming days, the LNA will likely increase pressure on the DPF in areas located west and southwest of the city, namely al-Hamar and al-Hila, in an effort to completely gain control over the entire mountain terrain surrounding the city of Derna. This will further enable the LNA to advance to the second stage of its offensive, which will likely involve heavy artillery fire and airstrikes against DPF targets within Derna, before the former launches a ground offensive into the city. However, DPF militants will likely put up resistance, possibly in the form of asymmetric attacks against LNA forces, in order to hinder the latter from making further gains. This may include vehicle-borne IED (VBIED) attacks, as witnessed on May 28 and May 29.

Focal Points in Derna



- Although the LAF has launched frequent airstrikes against Chadian militias in the Fezzan region over the past months, these airstrikes have been relatively less common over the recent weeks, thus rendering the latest development as notable. The most recent such airstrikes took place on [March 31](#), when the LAF targeted a Chadian armed convoy in an unspecified area south-west of the Haruj mountains. This past downturn can likely be attributed to the LAF's recent preoccupation in hostilities in Derna, which have likely compelled them to redeploy their aircraft to the northeast. That said, the latest airstrikes, which were likely conducted by aircraft stationed at the nearby Brak al-Shati Airbase, demonstrate the LNA's continued concerns regarding the threat posed by foreign militia groups in the largely tribal-controlled southern areas of the country, as well as their commitment to the [March 15](#) "no-fly" zone over southern Libya's airspace. Further similar LAF airstrikes against foreign militia groups in the south may occur over the coming weeks.

Recommendations

1. It is advised to defer all travel to Tripoli and Benghazi at this time due to a recent uptick in violence, threats against foreigners, and the risk of a broad deterioration of security conditions. We advise at this time that those remaining in Tripoli and Benghazi should initiate contingency and emergency evacuation plans due to deterioration in the security situation. Contact us at Operations@max-security.com or +44 20-3540-0434 for itinerary and contingency support plans.
2. For those remaining in Tripoli, we advise to avoid nonessential travel to the outskirts of the city, particularly the Janzour and Tajoura neighborhoods, as well as to the Mitiga and Tripoli International Airports, given that these are focal points of ground clashes and airstrikes in the city.
3. Travel to Misrata and Tobruk should be for essential purposes only, while adhering to all security precautions regarding civil unrest and militancy. We advise against all travel to outlying areas of the country, due to the threat of militancy, kidnapping, and general lawlessness in such areas.
4. Avoid entering Libyan territorial waters in the area between Benghazi and al-Tamimi without prior authorization, as a "no-sail zone" is currently in effect in this area and several naval vessels had been intercepted or attacked due to not following proper procedures.
5. Those planning to conduct air travel to, from and inside Libya should avoid entering the area between Marsa al-Brega, Sirte and Sebha, as it was declared a no-fly zone by the Libyan National Army (LNA).
6. We further advise against all travel to Libya's border areas at this time due to persistent violence and lawlessness in these regions.